

# TENNESSEE REGULATORY AUTHORITY



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **NEW AREA CODE NUMBER SELECTED; (VOL) COUNTRY IT IS**

**NASHVILLE** -- Round-up Smoky and the Pride of the Southland Band! The wait is over! The home of "VOL Country" has its new and very special area code.

**(865)**, which when spelled out on a telephone keypad reads **(VOL)**, will be *the* new area code for Knox and the (8) surrounding counties slated to receive a new area code.

The action stems from last week's Tennessee Regulatory Authority (TRA) decision wherein the Directors voted to implement an area code relief plan for a portion of East Tennessee to address the progressing number shortage issue.

"We approached Lockheed-Martin with a request for this specific number. Our concern was whether or not the number combination was available. And if it was available, we certainly wanted it," says TRA spokesperson, Greg Mitchell.

Lockheed-Martin, the organization that monitors number consumption for the U.S., Canada, and Caribbean, has estimated that by the fall of 1999, the (423) area code will exhaust.

Thus to address the issue, the TRA Directors decided to implement splitting the (423) area code by assigning the newest area code to the Knoxville calling areas, while allowing Chattanooga and the Tri-Cities to retain use of their current area codes.

"It was a tough decision for the Directors to make (assigning a new area code) because of the obvious inconvenience to those affected areas. So we decided to do what we could through the process of selecting a special number to make the transition more palatable."

The transition dialing period of the new area code will begin October 1, 1999, with mandatory dialing taking affect Feburary 1, 2000.

Cue up Rocky Top!

